

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the committee-reported substitute amendment to S. 178, a bill to provide justice for the victims of trafficking.

Mitch McConnell, John Cornyn, Shelley Moore Capito, Steve Daines, Roger F. Wicker, James Lankford, Deb Fischer, Tom Cotton, Ron Johnson, Richard Burr, Daniel Coats, Roy Blunt, Chuck Grassley, Tim Scott, Pat Roberts, Bill Cassidy, Jerry Moran.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I send another cloture motion to the desk for the bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on S. 178, a bill to provide justice for the victims of trafficking.

Mitch McConnell, John Cornyn, Shelley Moore Capito, Steve Daines, Roger F. Wicker, James Lankford, Deb Fischer, Tom Cotton, Ron Johnson, Richard Burr, Daniel Coats, Roy Blunt, Chuck Grassley, Tim Scott, Pat Roberts, Bill Cassidy, Jerry Moran.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum call be waived with respect to these cloture motions.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the first-degree filing deadline be at 5 p.m. on Monday, March 16.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from West Virginia.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING LEGISLATION

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act of 2015. I am proud to join with my colleagues to co-sponsor this important legislation, and I applaud Senator CORNYN and Senator KLOBUCHAR for putting together this bipartisan bill.

The Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act is a call to action. We heard a lot of discussion about it on the floor over the last several days. The horrible crime of human trafficking impacts thousands of Americans—mostly women and children—each year, and it occurs in cities, suburbs, and in rural towns. We cannot allow this horrendous crime to continue.

Last year, I hosted a forum at West Virginia State University to discuss how we could help in West Virginia to combat human trafficking. The event was very well attended and featured law enforcement advocates, academics, and State lawmakers. I also supported several bills when I was in the House of Representatives to further this fight and end this vicious crime.

It is monstrous to consider the sexual exploitation of a human being, especially a child. We must stand up for those voices that have been silenced and say “no more.”

While not in large numbers, trafficking occurs in West Virginia’s small communities and towns, in our hotels and in our truck stops, in schools, and online. Several things contribute to trafficking in the Mountain State—the interstates running in and around, our high poverty and unemployment rates. We also have a drug epidemic which contributes to this problem.

I am working in a bipartisan way with Senator JOE DONNELLY to address this drug epidemic, but we must also say “no more” to this shameful crime.

The Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act will make it easier for law enforcement to identify and address patterns of human trafficking. It takes a needed two-pronged approach. It bolsters the tools available to law enforcement to crack down on human traffickers and helps victims restore their lives through increased Federal resources.

We need to take care of our sons, our daughters, and our neighbors and keep our eyes and our ears open. This is not a Republican or Democratic issue; it is a human issue. Now is the time to stand up and say “no more” to human trafficking. Now is the time to show broad support for these victims and punish traffickers to the fullest extent of the law.

This bill has gone through a very transparent process. It was carefully considered and unanimously approved in the Senate Judiciary Committee. It has been available for every Senator or member of the public to read for months. Earlier this week each and every Senator consented to consider this bill on the Senate floor. It has widespread support from over 200 advocacy groups, including the NAACP, the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, Rights4Girls, the National Association to Protect Children, the Fraternal Order of Police, and the National Conference of State Legislatures.

The innocent victims of human trafficking have suffered enough. Now is

the time for us to join together and pass this legislation and take a significant step to end this crime.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

LYNCH NOMINATION

Mr. KAINE. Mr. President, I rise to speak on behalf of the nomination of Loretta Lynch to be Attorney General of the United States.

It is interesting that this is a week when we have been engaged in a dialogue about human trafficking, which is a serious and significant issue, obviously. But it, along with many other issues, demands a strong Justice Department, and a strong Justice Department is not possible without a confirmed Attorney General as a leader.

Ms. Lynch has now been nominated over 4 months ago. It has been 124 days since her nomination, and she has still yet to be confirmed. I rise to speak on her behalf.

I have visited with Loretta Lynch in person. I have observed her throughout the nominations process. My brother-in-law worked as an assistant U.S. attorney with her in the Eastern District of New York in the late 1990s. I am impressed, as are many of my colleagues, by her credentials and her extensive experience, and I was gratified to see that the Judiciary Committee reported her nomination to the floor.

I am disappointed that it has taken 124 days to get to this point. I was pleased to hear the majority leader indicate that the Senate may take up her nomination next week, but I think it is important for the Nation to recognize how critical this appointment is and how we should not have let it go this long.

I want to reflect back to probably the hardest elected office I held or will hold, which was mayor of Richmond. When I was a city councilman and mayor from 1994 to 2000, my city had the burden of having the second highest homicide rate in the United States. We worked in our community together with everyone, especially law enforcement and community leaders, to try to bring down that scourge of violent crime that was affecting neighborhoods, especially the poorest neighborhoods.

We were able, over the course of 7 years, to achieve some very dramatic success to make our city safer, but along the way I learned a couple of very important things. The first was this. One can’t tackle major public safety challenges without a strong relationship between the community and the local police department. It is impossible to make progress if that does not happen. Secondly, I also learned that one cannot tackle a difficult public safety challenge without a strong Department of Justice. We relied upon that partnership with our local U.S. attorney’s office in the Eastern District of Virginia—all the way up through